

**METHODS AND KITS FOR DIAGNOSING TUMORIGENICITY AND
DETERMINING RESISTANCE TO THE ANTINEOPLASTIC EFFECTS OF
ANTIESTROGEN THERAPY**

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application No. 09/456,886, filed December 8, 1999, ^{now US Pat. 6,720,159} which is a divisional of U.S. Application No. 08/863,079, filed May 23, 1997, now abandoned.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The proliferation and differentiation of cells in multicellular organisms is subject to a highly regulated process. A distinguishing feature of cancer cells is the absence of control over this process; proliferation and differentiation become deregulated resulting in uncontrolled growth. Significant research efforts have been directed toward better understanding this difference between normal and tumor cells. One area of research focus is growth factors and, more specifically, autocrine growth stimulation.

[0003] Growth factors are polypeptides which carry messages to cells concerning growth, differentiation, migration and gene expression. Typically, growth factors are produced in one cell and act on another cell to stimulate proliferation. However, certain malignant cells, in culture, demonstrate a greater or absolute reliance on an autocrine growth mechanism. Malignant cells which observe